

## Take a vacation from your usual summer electric bill

**ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (June 9, 2011)** – If a summer vacation is in your plans, be sure to include energy-saving measures in your pre-trip checklist to help lower your typical summer electric bill. [Progress Energy Florida](#) recommends that customers take a few simple steps before hitting the road to reduce their homes' energy use while they are away.

“With hot weather, it’s easy to run up a higher-than-average electric bill in the summer months if you’re not careful about how you’re using energy,” said Malcolm Barnes, energy efficiency manager for Progress Energy Florida. “Customers who make a point of limiting their homes’ electric use while they’re on vacation can return home to energy-cost savings.”

Customers can save energy a number of ways while they’re out of town.

- **Adjust the A/C.** The [Edison Electric Institute](#) recommends setting the thermostat to the low 80s and closing the drapes or blinds on windows facing south and west while on summer vacation. This will help minimize cooling costs while keeping air circulating throughout the home. Customers who leave pets behind when they go on vacation should ensure the temperature is appropriate.
- **Turn off the water heater.** There’s no need to keep hot water on standby while you’re away. Turn the water heater off at the circuit breaker if you’ll be gone for two days or more. This will help ensure the second-largest energy consumer in your home is resting while you’re away. When you return home, set it to 120 degrees instead of 140 to save up to \$85 a year in energy costs.
- **Limit lighting.** Want your home to look occupied while you’re out of town without driving up your energy costs? Use a timer to turn lights on and off at specified times. To further increase your energy savings, swap out any traditional, incandescent bulbs for compact fluorescent bulbs, which use up to 75 percent less power.
- **Zap energy vampires.** They’re lurking in virtually every home – electronics that sap energy even when they’re not in use. The [Department of Energy](#) estimates that energy vampires account for about five percent of energy consumed in the United States, at a typical cost to consumers of more than \$3 billion each year. The "instant-on" features of today’s electronics constantly use a trace amount of electricity. Help eliminate energy vampires by unplugging home electronics, such as charging equipment, video game consoles, TVs, cable boxes and computer equipment, when you’re not using them.
- **Make an energy-saving splash.** Reduce the operating time of your pool, hot tub and spa filters and automatic cleaning equipment to less than five hours per day. When no one is swimming, the water should stay clear with less filtration. Adjust hot tub and spa temperatures to the lowest possible setting or consider turning the heater off depending on the length of your trip.

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- **Cool it for less.** Your refrigerator can be made more energy efficient by adjusting the temperature slightly warmer and adding containers of water to keep it full, as a full unit runs more efficiently. You can achieve a similar benefit by storing containers filled with ice in the freezer. If vacationing for a long period of time, consider emptying the refrigerator and freezer and unplugging them to maximize savings.

These are just a few of the many ways customers can save energy and money this summer. For more energy-saving advice, turn to the energy experts at Progress Energy. Customers who sign up for a no-cost [Home Energy Check](#) – which can be performed online, over the phone or in person – will receive a customized assessment of their home’s energy-saving potential from one of our highly trained Energy Advisors. To sign up for a Home Energy Check, call 888-302-8348 or visit [progress-energy.com](http://progress-energy.com).

Progress Energy is an industry leader in the development and implementation of programs to help customers save energy and money. Through the company’s energy-efficiency programs, Progress Energy Florida’s customers have collectively saved more than \$1 billion in energy costs since 1981, reducing the need for enough electricity to power more than 900,000 homes for a year. In all, Progress Energy Florida currently offers its customers 14 programs and more than 100 energy-efficiency upgrades to reduce their energy bills and carbon footprints.

For more information on Progress Energy’s programs, visit [progress-energy.com](http://progress-energy.com).

Progress Energy Florida, a subsidiary of Progress Energy (NYSE: PGN), provides electricity and related services to more than 1.6 million customers in Florida. The company is headquartered in St. Petersburg, Fla., and serves a territory encompassing more than 20,000 square miles, including the cities of St. Petersburg and Clearwater, as well as the Central Florida area surrounding Orlando. Progress Energy Florida is pursuing a balanced approach to meeting the future energy needs of the region. That balance includes increased energy-efficiency programs, investments in renewable energy technologies and a state-of-the-art electricity system. For more information about Progress Energy, visit [www.progress-energy.com](http://www.progress-energy.com).

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